

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 04209 281856Z  
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W  
-----014826 281902Z /50  
O 281827Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE  
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2253

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 4209

EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

E.O.11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: EG, IS, PBOR, XF  
SUBJ: LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER BEGIN TO PRESIDENT SADAT

1. BEGIN HAS ASKED THAT WE TRANSMIT FOR HIM TO  
PRESIDENT SADAT A LETTER DATED MARCH 28 WHICH IS IN  
REPLY TO SADAT'S LAST LETTER TO HIM OF MARCH 10. HE  
HANDED ME THE TEXT OF THE LETTER DURING ANOTHER MEETING  
ON MARCH 28.

2. BEGIN MADE A SPECIAL POINT OF CALLING MY ATTENTION  
TO THE FACT THAT THIS BRIEF LETTER IS NON-POLEMICAL IN  
TONE, AND THAT HE HAS ESCHEWED MORE THAN A PASSING  
REFERENCE TO HIS EARLIER DEBATES WITH SADAT "OVER  
QUOTATIONS." OBVIOUSLY, HOWEVER, THE LETTER HAS NO  
SUBSTANCE, AND MERELY REPEATS AGAIN HIS CALL FOR A  
RENEWAL OF THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY COMMITTEE MEETINGS.  
I HAVE THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT IT IS INTENDED ONLY  
TO GIVE A PUBLIC INDICATION THAT THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN  
HIM AND SADAT HAS NOT BEEN BROKEN OFF, AND THAT ANY MORE  
SERIOUS COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE EGYPTIANS AND THE  
ISRAELIS AT THIS POINT IS PASSING THROUGH THE PRIVATE  
WEIZMAN-GAMASY CHANNEL WHICH REMAINS OPERATIONAL VIA  
ISRAELI STAFF ATTACHED TO THE MILITARY COMMITTEE AND STILL  
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RESIDENT IN CAIRO.

3. TEXT OF BEGIN'S LETTER IS AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE  
DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,  
I THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER OF MARCH 10.  
MAY I BEGIN BY SAYING THAT IN MY PREVIOUS REPLY TO  
YOU I WOULD HAVE MUCH PREFERRED NOT TO HAVE ENTERED INTO

MATTERS OF QUOTATIONS. HOWEVER, IT WAS NATURALLY MY DUTY TO RESPOND TO CERTAIN CONTENTIONS YOU VOICED. BUT THIS EXCHANGE RELATES TO THE PAST AND OUR CONCERN MUST BE TO CARE FOR THE FUTURE.

WITH REGARD TO MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE, I CANNOT AGREE, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT THE ARGUMENTATIONS I CITED IN MY LETTER TO YOU OF MARCH 5 ARE "LEGALISTIC." I LISTED SEVERAL FACTS WHICH ARE OF THE UTMOST PERTINANCE TO OUR MUTUAL RELATIONS. ONE CONCERNS THE CHARACTER OF THE SIX DAY WAR WHICH WAS THRUST UPON ISRAEL AND WHICH ISRAEL WAGED IN ABSOLUTE CONFORMITY WITH ITS INHERENT RIGHT OF LEGITIMATE NATIONAL SELF-DEFENSE. IT DID SO IN FACE OF A DIRECT THREAT NOT ONLY TO ITS INDEPENDENCE BUT ALSO TO ITS VERY EXISTENCE.

I STATE THIS, MR. PRESIDENT, NOT FOR THE SAKE OF LEGALISTIC POLEMICS BUT AS A SUBSTANTIVE CLARIFICATION OF THE CONCEPTS OF RIGHT AND WRONG, JUST AND UNJUST. YOU WILL RECALL THAT DURING OUR ISMAILIA MEETINGS I MADE REFERENCE TO THIS MATTER FOR THE SINGLE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING THE FUTURE COURSE OF OUR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.

IT IS IN THIS SPIRIT THAT I COMMUNICATE WITH YOU NOW.

YOU WRITE TO ME, KINDLY, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT YOU REMAIN READY TO RECONVENE THE TALKS IN THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY COMMITTEES. I SUGGEST THAT THEY INDEED BE RESUMED TO CONSIDER THE MATTERS ON THE AGENDA. THUS, THE EFFORT ITSELF TO ESTABLISH PEACE WILL BE RENEWED FOR  
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THE BENEFIT OF OUR TWO PEOPLES AND FOR THE SAKE OF THE GREAT GOAL FOR WHICH WE WORK INCESSANTLY, NAMELY THE NORMALIZATION OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.  
YOURS SINCERELY, MENACHEM BEGIN. END QUOTE.

4. ASSUME DEPARTMENT HAS NO OBJECTION TO AMBASSADOR EILTS DELIVERING THE LETTER TO SADAT PURELY AS TRANS-MISSION BELT TO FACILITATE CONTINUING CONTACT.  
LEWIS

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Subject:** LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER BEGIN TO PRESIDENT SADAT  
**TAGS:** PBOR, PDIP, EG, IS, XF, (SADAT, ANWAR), (BEGIN, MENACHEM)  
**To:** STATE SS MULTIPLE  
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